

Montgomery In Focus

# Nancy Floreen

May 2009



## Brick Paver Resolution Passes

Good news for people with disabilities: the Council approved my amended Resolution to restrict the use of brick pavers in the construction of streets, sidewalks and other public rights-of-way.

We amended the Resolution so that it would ban further use of cobblestones and stamped concrete from public rights-of-way but would permit brick pavers if they are installed according to specifications that are in accordance with the Bethesda Streetscape Standards.

The brick pavers would be allowed only in urban districts charged with maintaining them or where there is a permanent maintenance and liability agreement in effect that provides for their maintenance.

I'm delighted that we were able to respect the interests of various stakeholders in the Resolution. With the amendments, we have been able to ensure improved mobility and access for people with disabilities while at the same time allowing the aesthetic spirit to improve the look of our community. To learn more, visit my blog at [www.nancyfloreen.blogspot.com](http://www.nancyfloreen.blogspot.com).



Uneven surfaces can be a challenge to navigate.

## Fast Fact

DesignMontgomery, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's new Web feature, provides views of pending projects, including information about building heights, square footage and the mix of uses in order to engage residents in a discussion about good design. The site shows current or recently approved projects, public buildings and other design issues.

Innovative angles allow Web visitors to envision how a building will fit on a site. Planners will update pages with new projects in the coming months. Visit [www.montgomeryplanning.org](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org).

## Joining the President on Transit

I joined President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood for the unveiling of the President's new strategic plan for an effective network of high-speed passenger trains. I was representing the National Association of Counties where I am a member of the Transportation Steering Committee and chair of the Transit Subcommittee.

It was a tremendous honor to join the President and transit advocates from across the country for the unveiling of this plan that represents the future of transportation in our country. As a longtime advocate for transit, I am pleased that this Administration is acting on principles we've employed here in Montgomery County for years such as smart growth, transportation choice and accessible communities.

The President's plan identifies high speed rail as a viable, new choice for travel—providing seamless access to airports, light rail stations and busy urban

centers, alleviating congestion on the roads and in the air, helping to make America's communities more livable and sustainable and helping meet America's environmental goals. Under the plan, high-speed passenger trains would run in 100 to 600 mile corridors.

President Obama based his plan on his stated strategic transportation goals to ensure safe and effective transportation choices; build a foundation for economic competitiveness; promote energy efficiency and environmental quality; and support interconnected livable communities.

## New Uses for Transit Revenue

On a transportation funding note, the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee (T & E) has begun its discussions of Bill 17-09, Parking Lot Districts—Use of Revenue. I introduced this bill as a way of making it possible to use parking district revenues to fund transit.

As everyone knows, money is tight right now. On the table are proposals to eliminate bus service. It seems to me that where we have parking revenue not needed for parking services, we should be able to use some of that money to support alternatives to driving.

The law already permits the use of these revenues (fines and parking fees) for transit related uses. Right now, we spend over \$5 million of this money on traffic management, ridesharing, commuting alternatives, other mass transit uses and the urban district services.

Transit has long been a priority for me, and it is our best option for reducing congestion, combating climate change and ultimately enhancing our quality of life. I'm committed to looking at any opportunity to preserve transit under our budget constraints. Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council) to see current bills.

## Subscribe Online

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/esubscription/](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/esubscription/)

## Turning Blue into Green

Now your old blue jeans can have a whole new life—as home insulation. Thanks to a partnership between Cotton Incorporated and Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County ReStore, in collaboration with Amicus Green Building Center, this environmentally friendly insulation will be provided for homes in areas of need.

I had a great time at the Earth Day demonstration of this innovative technology, and I especially enjoyed supporting the environment and affordable housing simultaneously. If you want to participate in the recycling drive, you can drop off your denim until June 15 at Amicus Green Building Center in Kensington.



Insulation is made from recycled denim.

## Budget Info on My Blog

As we continue to work on one of the most challenging budget seasons we have ever faced, I want to make sure our process is as transparent as possible and that you have every opportunity to participate. That's why I am posting the background information for all budget discussions on my blog at [www.nancyfloreen.blogspot.com](http://www.nancyfloreen.blogspot.com). This way you'll have the same information we do as we deliberate.

Check back often as I will update this page daily between now and our final budget action on May 21. Also, you can visit the Council Web site at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council) for committee schedules if you want to hear the discussions. Most importantly, tell me what matters most to you.